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## A TURKISH SMOKING-ROOM.

"HOME," ANSWER TO A CORRESPONDENT.

FEW American houses are large enough or the family small enough to afford the luxury of a smoking-room *per se*, but when a room can be specially set apart for this purpose and treated characteristically, it seems particularly appropriate to fit it up in Turkish style, or rather, perhaps, in a conventionalized form of that style, for Turkish furnishing, pure and simple, would scarcely find favor in the comfort-loving eyes of Americans.

A general aspect of bareness and emptiness is the distinguishing trait of Turkish rooms, and this is owing in a great measure to the absence of pictures, as the Osmanlee is taught to regard with horror a representation of "anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth." And yet, in contradiction of the first clause, he will sometimes have the ceiling of his reception-room—where the principal part of the smoking is done—blue, and ornament it with silver stars, while exquisite carvings of wood work in wealthy houses seem in a measure to take the place of the miracles wrought by pencil and brush.

A ceiling of lace-like carving in some light wood is occasionally met with and impresses one with a sense of unique beauty, but even in Turkey this is a thing of the past, and as rarely seen as solid mahogany doors and substantial walls are with us.

An American room devoted to tobacco incense might begin its transformation into Turkish with the highest point—painting the ceiling in pale blue and studding it both with silver stars and crescents. The walls could be papered in light terra cotta with an arabesque pattern of darker shade or of black, and a dado of paneled walnut or ebony would make a suitable finish. A narrow molding of dark red with a similar one in black on either side will be sufficient by way of frieze.

The floor of this smoking-room to be thoroughly in character should be covered with plain white matting. That used in Turkey is made in Egypt, in fine stripes produced by ridges in the weaving, and known as *hasseem*, but a very good substitute can be found here in a fine quality of Chinese matting. Some Daghestan prayer rugs and a tiger or leopard skin will complete the floor furnishing.

A platform at one end of the room, half a foot or so above the floor, and on this the divan, a low, box-like sofa, extending the entire width of the apartment, is indisputably Turkish. It would be still more so if continued across two sides of the room, as it is almost the only article of furniture in many rooms of its native land, and frequently occupies three sides of the wall. This divan is scarcely a foot above the platform; and the back is formed by the large cushions which are so characteristic of the ease-loving Orientals.

The covering for this sofa—the original of which is stigmatized by travelers as hard and uncomfortable—affords infinite variety, the wealthy

Turk indulging in rich silk stuffs, often decorated with gold embroidery, while the man of moderate means contents himself with blue and white striped cotton. These stripes usually figure in Oriental pictures, and seem to be inseparably associated with Turks and Arabs. The same effect may be produced in very cheap material by sewing together unbleached muslin and Turkey-red in alternate stripes of six or seven inches—the stripes to run from back to front. A fringe of flat tassels, made of the two colors in cotton or worsted, would give a suitable finish to the edge of the seat.

For something richer than this, woven silk rags would make a beautiful covering, although a question might arise as to durability, *portières* and curtains being the only purposes to which they have hitherto been applied. They might possibly resent being sat upon, and show it in frayed edges and irregularities; but, setting this objection aside, such a covering would have a particularly

The windows should in some way be contrived to arch at the top—a wooden frame would give the effect, and the arch might be filled in with Lincrusta-Walton richly gilded. Below this, on an almost invisible brass rod, there should be curtains to match or harmonize with the divan. One or two windows might be simulated on the side walls, with the aid of arches and drapery, as Turkish houses have numbers of them in one room, and where the apartment is large they help to furnish. To be strictly in character, there should be no chimney projection, with its mantel-shelf, in such a room, and it could be treated as a huge window, and the necessary heat received from a register.

Turkish *portières* for the doors, in heavy wool and cotton mixed, are easily obtained at almost any little shop where Eastern goods are sold; and here, too, are sometimes found brass candlesticks, three and four feet high, to set upon the floor. These are old-fashioned, however, having been superseded, as with us, by gas; and possibly, years hence, the native relic-hunter may wander about the Orient as his Western brother now haunts the shores of Long Island and the back settlements of the Hudson in quest of these scarce supporters of the light of other days. One or two of them would not be amiss in our American-Turkish smoking-room.

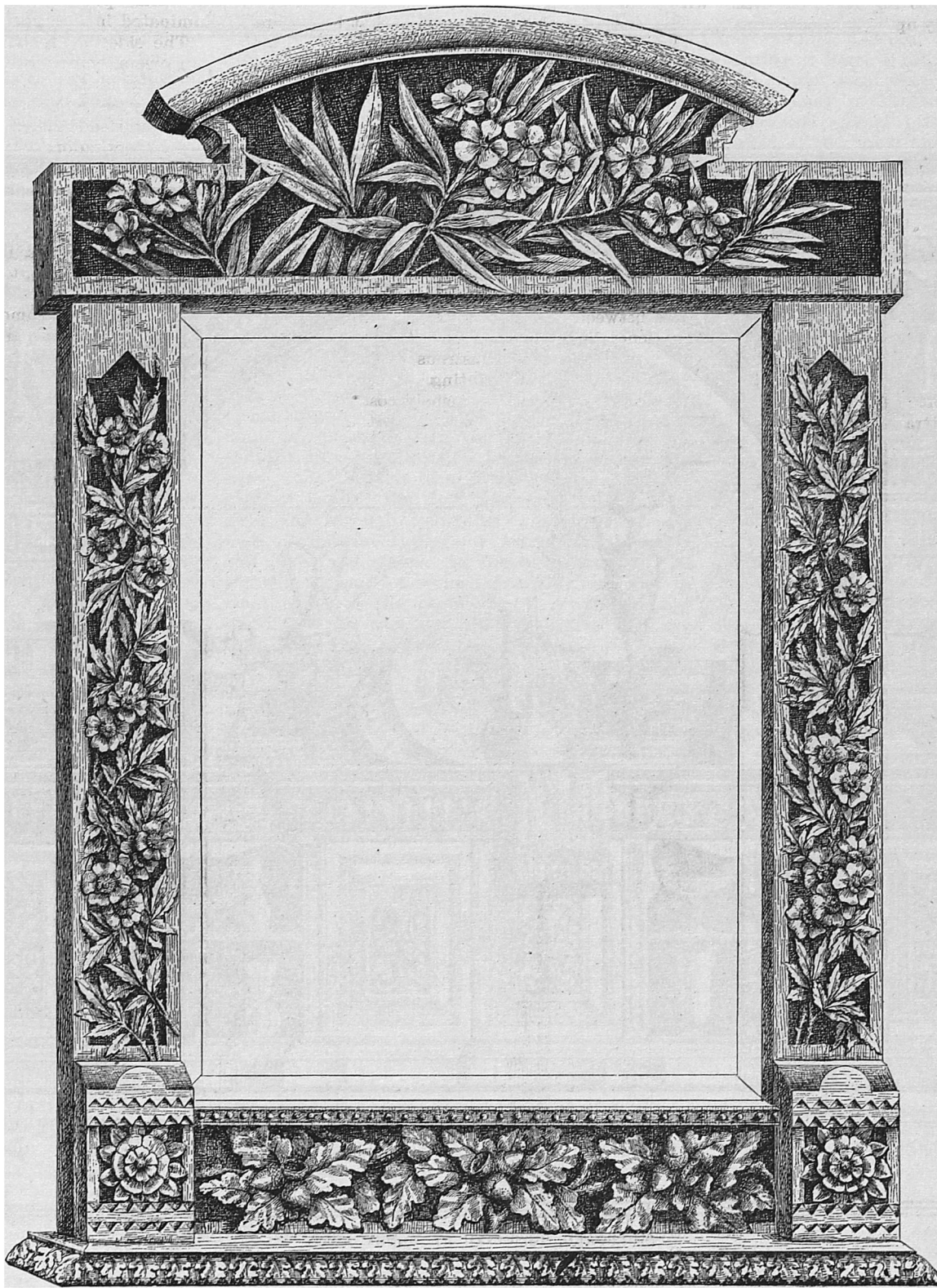
A finely-carved screen of ebony or other wood is quite an important adjunct in producing the true Oriental effect; and such things may be found at some of the best shops, but they are not to be had for a mere song, being rather costly articles. The *chibouk* and *nargilé*, of clay or cherry-wood, with handsome amber mouth-pieces, must not be forgotten, nor the diminutive coffee-cups with their stands of embossed gilt, which support them as the calyx does the flower. Turkish coffee is the invariable accompaniment of Turkish smoking; and a round brass tray, three feet or so in diameter, holds the apparatus, and is itself supported on a broad stool which is called a table, although not more than a foot or so from the floor.

Some weapons of war are often crossed upon the wall—the *yataghan* and long, slender battle-axe, diversified, perhaps, by a musical instrument, not unlike a large horn, suspended by a brass chain. Cabinets would be quite out of place; for when the Turk owns rare old china and other treasures dear to the collector's heart, he feels that the proper thing to do is to lock them up where no human eye can ever see them, and acts accordingly.

The details of our smoking-room may be varied extensively, with Lincrusta-Walton as a dado, and dull, Indian-red paper above it. The divan, too, can be covered with striped shawls, and the same material used for curtains and *portières*. An actual rug,

to hang in the doorway from a brass pole, would also be appropriate; and a very handsome one can be made of pieces of different-colored felt by strictly copying the design from the imported article.

PICTURES should be hung with two cords or wires, one at each end of the frame.



CARVED PORTRAIT FRAME.

The carved Portrait Frame, illustrated above, is an example of recent work by pupils of the Art School of Cincinnati. The frame is of stained cherry, 4 feet 4 inches by 3 feet in width, exclusive of the shelf. The carving is somewhat over one inch in relief. An added expression is given to the decoration by lowering the margins, and allowing the design to occasionally creep over the edge. The width of the stiles and bottom rail is 5 inches, the top is 12 inches, exclusive of the projecting cap. There is strength as well as delicacy in the cutting. The grace and freedom of plant growth are well preserved, though the spaces decorated are so limited in width. It seems peculiarly appropriate to give a rich setting to the portrait of an esteemed relative, friend or hero. The oak, white oleander, and the wild rose are intended, in this case, to express "sweetness and strength." The wild rose here represented, is the swamp rose of the South, the leaves of which are much more slender than those of the better known variety common to the Northern States.

rich and harmonious effect. Should the silk rags not be available, there are many handsome stuffs to be had at fairly reasonable prices. If the woodwork be ebonized, a yellow damask—either mandarin yellow or old gold—would look well with that and the terra cotta walls; and the cushions could be covered with squares of Oriental embroidery on a ground of blue velours.